Various types of location may be observed. In Malta (Fig. 89) there are, first, the main irrigated vegetable zones of the Wied tal-Pwales and Wied tal-Mistra where cultivation is carried out on a commercial scale. A great variety of crops are raised, but artichokes assume a particular importance. Secondly, in the Bur Marrad district of the Wied il-Ghasel, there is considerable specialisation, particularly in artichokes and to a lesser extent in brassicas. Thirdly, there is the group of districts around certain settlements with urban-fringe market gardening. Near Żabbar, mixed vegetables, predominantly brassicas, are cultivated in many small plots, often worked by part-time farmers. Around Qormi, the possibility of irrigation has encouraged a very considerable spread of market gardening which further extends into Hamrun. Near Rabat, a similar, smaller zone is also of some importance for mainly non-brassica crops. 311* 244

Lastly, a belt of vegetable cultivation occurs on the high central platforms between Żebbug-Siġġiewi and the Rabat-Dingli upland. In Fig. 89 the importance of this zone is not fully illustrated. Fig. 91, showing tilled land during the survey period, gives an indication of the considerable area which is, later in each year, devoted to summer vegetables. This is pre-eminently the area of brassica cultivation with cauliflowers of particular importance. The reasons for this are not completely known, but seem in the main to reflect climatic and soil advantages (see Chapter VIII).

In Gozo (Fig. 90) the range of vegetables grown is rather smaller than in Malta, and cultivation is much more closely confined to the settlement fringes. There are some exceptional districts, such as the Wied tal-Mistra in the north-east and the small depression lying north-west of Victoria, where good supplies of water have encouraged commercial specialisation.

TILLED LAND (Figs. 91 and 92)

Land shown in this category is that which either had a prepared tilth in readiness for further sowing and planting or had been cleared for summer fallow. This would follow early harvesting of sulla, *ferrana* and potatoes or a long fallow period. Areas where tree-crop cultivation is widespread are obviously of little significance in this category. Classification problems arise in that cleared land unsuitable for summer cultivation (for reasons of environment or rotation) is, under Maltese conditions, difficult to distinguish from land about to be planted. However, it can be stated with some degree of certainty that in Malta the main belt of tilled land west of Siġġiewi and Żebbuġ represents land prepared for summer vegetable cultivation (see Chapter VIII). In Gozo, much of the tilled land of the west is prepared in readiness for summer cotton growing. 311* 241

COTTON (*Qoton*)

The cultivation of cotton, which was widespread in the Maltese Islands from Classical times to the mid-nineteenth century, has been slowly reviving in Gozo during the last few years. 311* 248

This is only the annual crop of which the seasonal range fell completely outside the survey period. Cultivation is most considerable around Żebbuġ, Għarb and San Lawrenz. Environmental conditions are far from optimum and the future of cotton growing depends largely on the efforts and interest of one textile firm and of the Government.

FALLOW LAND - Malta (Fig. 93)

Land classified under this head is that which neither carried a crop nor had a prepared tilth but which did not appear to have been unworked for more than about a year. Some such land is inevitably in the first stage of abandonment, but other areas have remained uncultivated for a variety of other reasons connected with quarrying, tenurial disputes, demands of the Defence Departments and various types of farming hazard. 311* 241

8:Brockman T-5 (no date) 1938
EZ6 Malta EZ6

885 "In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children and thou shalt be under thy husband's power, and he shall have dominion over thee. . . ."

In all other things they remain children and "of such is the Kingdom. . . ."

So that the curse of Adam may lie less heavily upon these children of an unfertile rock, the Old Things have blessed them with an uncanny ability to make flowering fields out of nothing.[1]

THE SKY AND THE SOIL

821 171 [369] The weather and husbandry lore of the peasant has much to do with the success of his untiring hands. Much of this peasant wisdom is incomprehensible to the town-bred Maltese (too often they have lost touch or dismiss it—in hybrid Italian—as *ignuranza*); much of it has exact parallels in the lore of the English countryside, as for example the following:

Maltese	*English*
821 171 539 "The Moon eats everything."	"Fair weather with a full moon."
"The stars wink at the coming wind."	"Twinkling stars foretell high winds."
"Sky like a turtle's back; heavy rains, fierce winds."	"A rounded cloud with flattened base carries rainfall in its face."
"Clouds with heads of men and beasts bring in the thunder and the lightning."	

[248] [1] During the early years of the last century Malta's cotton crop was valued at an average of one and a half millions sterling annually. The cotton industry, dating from Roman times and earlier, is now practically dead.